

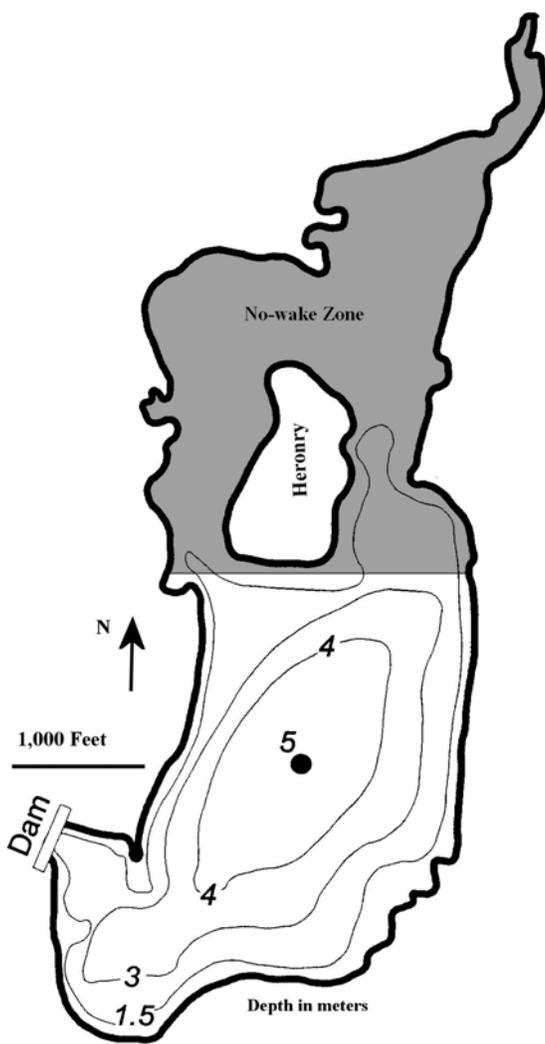
## A Community Treasure, Peltier Lake, NEEDS YOUR HELP!!!

In 2002, the DNR, Anoka County and the cities of Lino Lakes and Centerville cooperated to enact an ordinance that stopped senseless environmental damage to wildlife and the aquatic environment of northern Peltier Lake. **However**, this protection is scheduled for termination in 2004 unless Lino Lakes modifies their ordinance. Centerville has the same ordinance but it is permanent. If the Lino Lakes ordinance is not made permanent too, Peltier Lake will almost surely face renewed environmental destruction. The public hearings are May 10 and 24, 2004.

**Please sign a petition so that Peltier Lake is protected now and for future generations.**

**Also call the Lino Lakes Council. See details at end or call 651-253-7396. Also visit:**

**[WWW.PELTIERLAKE.ORG](http://WWW.PELTIERLAKE.ORG)** (for the form and other information)



Peltier Lake is like two different lakes (Fig 1). The south half is deep enough for normal fishing and boating. The north half has a large island containing the second largest heron rookery in the metro area, and almost all the grey shown is shallow and filled with aquatic plants or bogs. High speed boating there causes environmental damage.

Before 1998, there used to be thousands of great blue herons, many black-crowned night herons and other birds on the large island in Peltier Lake. The area around and north of the island was thick with beneficial native mostly coontail aquatic plants. People respected the north area of the lake because it was shallow (only 3 or 4 feet deep), filled with aquatic plants, and home to thousands of birds. People used the south half of the lake for fishing and boating where it is deeper and mostly does not have aquatic plants and the herons tended to nest on the northern half of the island to keep away from the people. Very few people ventured north of the island, but those that did, did so slowly causing little damage. The northern area of Peltier Lake is essentially wilderness.

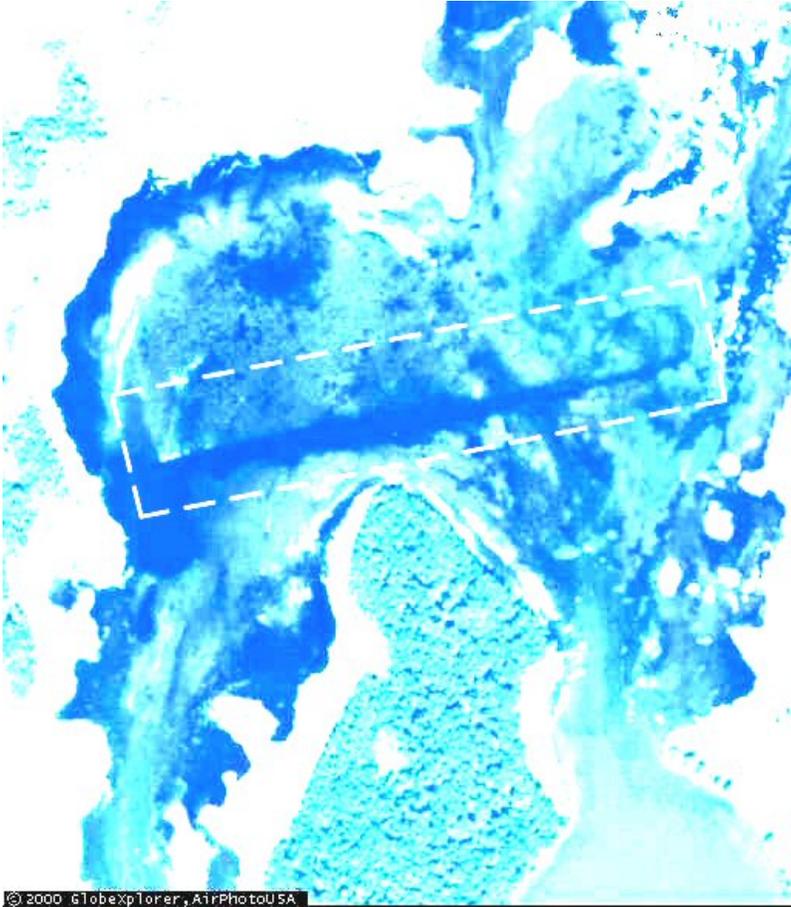
In 1998, a person set up a slalom water-ski course on the northern edge of the island right next to the heron rookery and in the middle of the native coontail vegetation (Fig 2). This is the first time anyone had gone in this isolated area in such a big way. Because there was great concern for the environment and the heron numbers seemed down, the Peltier Lake Association called in experts and officials from Anoka County Parks, the Minnesota DNR, the cities of Lino Lakes and Centerville. Lake residents also attended including the ski course owner. In a two hour meeting, experts explained the area was biologically rare and sensitive. An agreement was reached and documented by Anoka Parks to stop water skiing by the island and north to protect the aquatic plants, herons and the environment. The ski course owner insisted the agreement be "informal."

Fig 1. Sensitive Peltier Bog and Shallow Water Area.

Incredibly, in 2001, the slalom water-ski course was again in use, but it was rigged to submerge when not in use, to keep it hidden from view. The course was also used in 2000 but it is so isolated and wild north of the island that nobody noticed. When confronted in 2001, they said they could do anything they wanted and flatly refused to stop using the course. The meeting with the experts didn't mean a thing and the insistence on an informal agreement seemed to be a trick. The March 2002 issue of the The Hugonian newspaper reported the attitude of the ski course owner, "...moving the slalom course isn't an option." The owner insisted on putting his ski course in an area that results in damage to the lake.

Beneficial, water filtering native coontail aquatic plants roughly 2,000 feet by 200 feet (400,000 square feet) were destroyed (Fig 2). In addition, the bottom is a very fine silty mud only 3 or 4 feet deep and the powerful high speed ski boat used in the slalom water-ski course kicked up sediment suspending huge amounts of nutrients in the water. This is

equivalent to dumping truckloads of fertilizer into the lake. Huge pea soup algae blooms were terrible. Coontail, normally never seen in the south part of the lake was all over the lake in large mats. These plants died and became huge rotting stinking masses. The Metropolitan Council assessment of the water quality was “The lake’s 2001 water quality was its worst recorded to date.”



Every single black-crowned night heron vanished. The entire species was wiped out from the island. Great blue heron nesting failed for the years 2000, 2001, and 2002. There were reports of ski activity in 2000. In 2001, the ski course was used heavily all summer. In 2002, there were reports of a high speed boat near the heron rookery on April 15, at ice out, a particularly sensitive time for the herons.

With great effort, a no-wake zone was established on June 11, 2002, too late for the 2002 season. In 2003, with the no-wake zone in force the whole 2003 season, water quality returned. In addition, several hundred great blue herons returned, successfully nested and produced young. This was the first successful nesting in 3 years. It is possible that there are other factors affecting the herons, but it is clear that high speed boats near the island disturb the birds. It is also crystal clear that before 1998, black-crowned night herons were all over and nested on the island. The year after the slalom water-ski course was established, every single black-crowned night heron vanished. The black-crowned night herons are particularly sensitive to disturbance because they forage at night and roost in the daytime. Daytime disturbance such as use of a slalom water-ski course looks like it made them leave for good. The timing

Fig 2. Destroyed Beneficial Vegetation and CCW Turnaround at Right.

and cause and effect on the black-crowned night herons total disappearance is very difficult to explain any other way than human disturbance. There have been no sightings of black-crowned night herons since the slalom water-ski activity began. Also see “Rookery Blues” at [www.dnr.state.mn.us/volunteer/marapr04/rookery.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/volunteer/marapr04/rookery.html).

Even if there were no birds on the island, the plants and sediments in that sensitive part of the lake must be protected with a no-wake zone. The water quality of the lake is the most important aspect. There are people who just don’t care and there could be others who do not understand. For everybody’s benefit, the sensitive environment needs protection.

The following groups and individuals have written letters stating the need for permanent formal protection: Minnesota DNR, Anoka County Parks, Rice Creek Watershed District, former Anoka County Commissioner Margarit Langfeld, current Anoka County Commissioner Rhonda Sivarajah, Minnesota Ornithologist’s Union, Director of Bell Museum of Natural History, St Paul Audubon Society, the City of Centerville, and the Minnesota Lakes Association. The support FOR the no-wake zone is overwhelming. The no-wake zone has not affected normal use of the lake.

To help, write by May 7 or 21 to: Save Peltier Lake, 1677 Peltier Lake Drive, Centerville, MN 55038. Include your name, signature, address, and date. Use this: **We support the current no-wake zone ordinance, that protects the Great Blue Heron Rookery and the northern portion of Peltier Lake, as passed by the City of Centerville in 2002. We are concerned citizens and petition the City Council of Lino Lakes to remove the sunset clause from their no-wake zone ordinance now, and to do so without weakening the ordinance in any way.** Also, call each Council member (all 651-982-xxxx): John Bergeson 2492, Donna Carlson 2490, Caroline Dahl 2494, Dan Stoltz 2493, Jeff Reinert 2491.

If any questions, send email to [mail@peltierlake.org](mailto:mail@peltierlake.org), or call 651-253-7396 and leave a message and phone number.